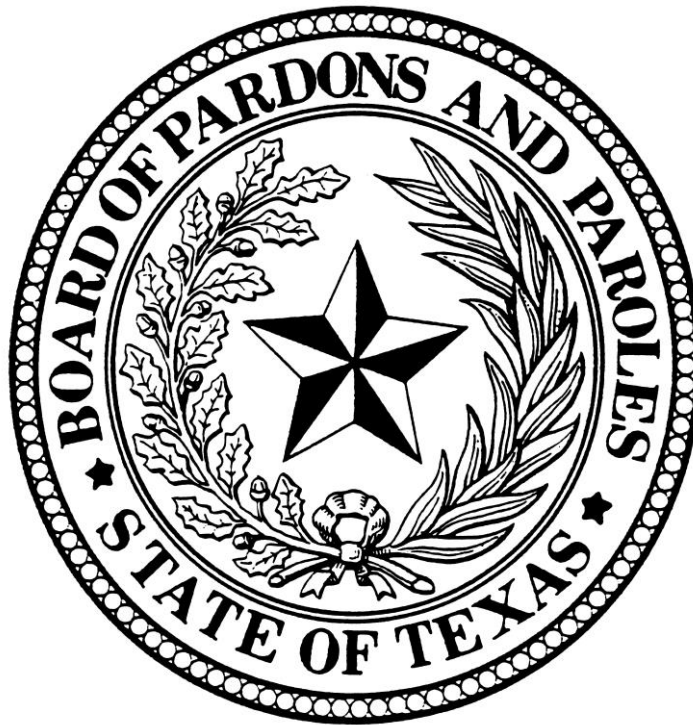


TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

MINUTES

Board Workshop No. 18-1017



October 17, 2018

Austin, Texas

TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

WORKSHOP

Holiday Inn Austin Midtown
6000 Middle Fiskville Rd.
Elm Room
Austin, Texas 78757

October 17, 2018

10:00 AM

Order of Business

1. Call Workshop to Order
2. Texas Risk Assessment System (TRAS)
3. Parole Violations
4. National Parole Resource Center (NPRC) Project
5. Security Threat Groups(STG)/Street Gangs
6. Adjourn



MINUTES OF THE TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES BOARD WORKSHOP WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018

REGULAR SESSION

The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) met in open session on Wednesday, October 17, 2018, at 10:00 a.m., Holiday Inn Austin Midtown, 6000 Middle Fiskville Rd., Elm Room, Austin, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

David Gutiérrez
Carmella Jones
James LaFavers
Brian Long
Fred Rangel
Ed Robertson
Fred Solis

PAROLE COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Lee Ann Eck-Massingill
Ira Evans
Troy Fox
Tony Garcia
Gerald Garrett
Raymond Gonzalez
Marsha Moberley
James Hensarling
James Kiel
Anthony Ramirez
Wanda Saliagas
Charles Speier
Roel Tejada

OTHERS PRESENT

Bettie Wells, General Counsel
Timothy McDonnell, Chief of Staff
Jessica Dillard, Board Administrator
Kyle Britt, Budget Director
Raymond Estrada, Director, Public Information
Rachel Alderete, Director, Hearing Operations
Veronica Muraira, Director, Administrative Support
Joe Lange, Director, Staff Development
Tracy Long, Director, Institutional Parole Operations
Robin Biscamp, Deputy Director, Institutional Parole Operations
Donna Graham-Green, Regional Operations Supervisor, Hearing Operations
Elwood Putnam, Regional Operations Supervisor, Hearing Operations
Michael Adams, Regional Operations Supervisor, Hearing Operations
Margo Green, Regional Supervisor, Institutional Parole Operations
Marnie Wood, Regional Supervisor, Institutional Parole Operations
Mary Poston, Regional Supervisor, Institutional Parole Operations
Shane Smith, Regional Supervisor, Institutional Parole Operations
Libby Hamilton, Board Victim Services Program Liaison
Terence Hall, Systems Analyst
Estela DeHoyos, Program Supervisor
Jessica Guerrero, Program Specialist
Kelsey Stratton, Technical Writer
Matthew Schlosser, Multimedia Technician
The Honorable James White, Texas House of Representatives
Roel Benavides, Clerk, House Corrections Committee

CONVENED – TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

Presiding Officer (Chairman) David Gutiérrez convened the meeting of October 17, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Open Meetings Act. After roll call, the Chairman stated a quorum was present and declared the meeting open.

RECOGNITIONS

Chairman Gutiérrez recognized Representative James White and Roel Benavides, House Corrections Committee Clerk. He also recognized the Board Members and Commissioners present.

Representative White on behalf of the House of Representatives, and the House Committee on Corrections thanked the Board Members and Commissioners for their hard work and public service, noting he receives constituent's comments and reports regarding the Board and the comments are always good.

TEXAS RISK ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (TRAS) (ATTACHMENT A)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Carey Welebob, Community Justice Assistance Division (CJAD) Director to discuss the Texas Risk Assessment System (TRAS).

Ms. Welebob provided an overview of TRAS, a risk assessment tool designed to help community supervision, prison, reentry and aftercare professionals create custom case management programs for individual offenders. The TRAS System interprets an offender's criminal history along with their criminogenic needs, allowing criminal justice professionals to develop the most efficient case plans possible, enabling the agency to carefully distribute supervision resources and, in turn, reduce offender recidivism rates and increase public safety. Ms. Welebob provided a history of TRAS and discussed the Common Problems with Offender Assessment; Implementing Evidence-Based Practice: The Integrated Model; Eight Guiding Principles of Evidence-Based Practice; Senate Bill 213; Target interventions; Risk Principle; Responsivity Principle; Dosage; Treatment Principle; Need Principle; Criminogenic Needs; Supervision Levels vs. Risk Levels; Applying the Risk and Responsivity Principles; and Applying the Need principle.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Ms. Welebob for her presentation.

PAROLE VIOLATIONS (*ATTACHMENT B*)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Richard Stroker, Senior Associate with the center for Effective Public Policy (CEPP) to discuss parole violations.

Mr. Stroker provided an overview of promising practices in responding to parole violations, including considering and discussing goals to contemplate for parole violation responses in Texas; role of evidence based practices in helping to achieve these goals and opportunities to consider to reduce violations, expand options, and improve consistency in violation responses.

Mr. Stroker conveyed all violations should be responded to in some way. Responses should be swift and certain, using the least onerous response necessary to move the individual towards compliance. The level of risk and severity of the behavior should be considered when determining a response. Also, critical factors include the risk to the community/victim(s) as well as the nature, type, and extent of the violation. Finally, responses are to be organized in an objective way so that the most significant sanctions are used in the most appropriate cases.

In closing, Mr. Stroker stated improved public safety is the goal. Using methods that help promote lawful and compliant behavior by offenders are important keys to improved public safety. Evidence based research has helped to understand some steps that can be taken to better influence future offender behaviors. These steps include the appropriate use of violation responses and the effective use of violation guidelines or tools.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Mr. Stroker for his presentation.

NATIONAL PAROLE RESOURCE CENTER (*ATTACHMENT C*)

Chairman Gutiérrez yielded the floor to Board Member Brian Long and Chief of Staff Tim McDonnell.

Mr. Long briefly discussed the National Parole Resource Center (NPRC) Project, resulting from House Bill 2468 filed in the last legislative session. He stated although the bill did not pass, it brought highlight to the violation and revocation process. Mr. Long shared his experience relating to the violation revocation process, noting the Board's goal is to have consistency around the state when dealing with violations; looking at cases from a different perspective and examining the whole totality of cases in rendering decisions.

Mr. McDonnell provided background information for the NPRC Project (Responding to Parole Violations, Revisiting the Process). He stated the Board applied for technical assistance in the area of Parole Guidelines and Revocation Decision Making January 2018 and in February 2018, Texas was selected to receive technical assistance. Although the Board initially looked at requesting technical assistance to examine both the Parole Guidelines and the Revocation Process, the Board decided to narrow the scope of the project to the Revocation Process.

The NPRC Project team members include the Chairman, Board Members, Parole Commissioners, Chief of Staff, General Counsel, Board Administrator, Director of Hearings/Administrative Support, Hearing Officer, Analyst, and a Parole Division representative. Also, subgroups were established for specific purposes. Mr. McDonnell discussed the project's focus, which included understanding the current violation and revocation process, mapping of the violation process at each state, and determining what the most significant factors the Hearing Officer and Analysts consider when rendering recommendations. Also, they looked at how to incorporate the direction of voters into more consistent recommendations by the Hearing Officer and Analyst.

Mr. McDonnell explained the actions of the project to date, which include 1) input from Board Members and Parole Commissioners; 2) understanding the current process; 3) development of a Board Vision Statement for the Violation Process; 4) creation of a new assessment form that replaces the current statement and incorporates an objective measuring tool (TRAS) and provides positive information regarding an offender's conduct while on supervision; and 5) development of a matrix for both Administrative (Technical) and Law Violations that reflect the Vision established and approved by the board, which can be used as a guide when a Hearing Officer or Analyst makes a recommendation to a parole panel.

Mr. McDonnell stated they will continue to review and complete the proposed matrix and present it to Board members for approval. Upon approval the matrix will be incorporated into the hearing Officer and Analyst manual and training will be provided to Hearing Officers and Analysts. The project impact will be monitored and they will make any adjustments as necessary.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Mr. Long, Mr. McDonnell, and the committee for their hard work on the project.

SECURITY THREAT GROUPS/STREET GANGS (*ATTACHMENT D*)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Jay Hart, Manager of Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Security Threat Groups Office (STGO) to present on prison gangs.

Mr. Hart discussed the organizational structure of the STGMO and explained the reason their office was created. He provided a gang overview, which included gang violence within TDCJ; security threat groups identified; disruptive groups; cliques; duties and responsibilities of the USTGO; gang member communication, codes and tattoos; disassociation programs, including Gang Renouncement and Disassociation (GRAD), General Population Gang Renouncement and Disassociation (GP-GRAD), and Administrative Segregation Diversion Program (ASDP).

Currently there are 12 security threat groups identified, Aryan Brotherhood of Texas; Aryan Circle; Barrio Azteca; Boods; Crips; Hermanos de Pistoleros Latinos; Mexican Mafia; Partido Revolucionario Mexicanos; Raza Unida; Texas Chicano Brotherhood; Texas Mafia; and Texas Syndicate. With exception of Bloods, Crips, Partido Revolucionario Mexicanos, Texas Chicano Brotherhood, and Texas Mafia, all

groups upon confirmation are placed in restrictive housing. The groups are reviewed every year to determine whether or not they still meet the criteria for restrictive housing. Mr. Hart stated STGMO is currently reviewing their policy and making changes. Chairman Gutiérrez asked to be notified of the results of their review.

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Officer Christopher Wille with the Austin Police Department (APD) to present on street gangs.

Officer Wille provided a brief overview of their unit, stating they have 15 detectives assigned to the Safe Street Task Force, which is a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Task Force. The task force also includes state troopers; Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents; FBI agents; and seven officers.

Officer Wille discussed Austin gangs, stating currently there are 103 active gangs with the top five largest gangs being the Bloods, Crips, Tango Blast, Texas Syndicate and Aryan Brotherhood. Austin Gangs are unique since they do not have traditional boundaries or turf. They have no outright rivalries or issues between gangs, and they are made up of members from different gangs. Also, they lack traditional knowledge of their gang history; money is their sole purpose.


Officer will also stated Austin is experiencing the development of Hybrid Gangs, which are new youth gangs engaging in different types of illegal activity. Hybrid Gangs consist of people from different racial/ethnic groups. They have loose leadership structure and codes of conduct, and they may be formed from members of other gangs, or arise out of joint criminal endeavors such as narcotics sales, burglaries, auto thefts, etc. Two Hybrid gangs now in Austin are the 59 Brims gang and the 700 gang. Officer Wille stated with the new emerging of Hybrid gangs, it's going to be more difficult to recognize them in prison and the parole process.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Jay Hart and Officer Wille for their presentations.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed all posted items on the agenda, Chairman Gutiérrez adjourned the Board Workshop at 5:00 p.m.

ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF THE BOARD ON THE 17th DAY OF JANUARY, 2019.


DAVID GUTIÉRREZ, PRESIDING OFFICER (CHAIR)